

I want to pay special recognition to the Community HealthCare Association in South Dakota, and all of the staff at the association for the fine work they do on behalf of South Dakota. Furthermore, I want to commend all of the dedicated health care professionals in the health centers throughout South Dakota who work day in and day out devoting their lives to delivering critical health care to those most in need.

At this time, there are 25 community health centers serving individuals across my State and I am working with my colleagues in Congress and the administration to greatly increase the number of these centers nationwide. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I am pleased to have recently voted in committee to increase funding by \$122 million over last year's funding, for a total of \$1.62 billion for the Nation's community health centers next year. I will continue to work with my colleagues to see that we are able to double funding for these medical centers by 2006.

Once again, it gives me great pleasure to recognize the National Health Care Center Week on behalf of the South Dakota Community HealthCare Association and the many thousands of South Dakotans who may continue to benefit through this important program.●

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL CHARLES J. FIALA, JR., COMMANDER, BALTIMORE ENGINEER DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

● Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I want to pay tribute today to Colonel Charles Fiala, Commander and District Engineer of the Baltimore District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. COL Fiala is retiring after a distinguished 25-year career in the U.S. Army, and I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate him and commend him for his many years of service to our Nation.

Chuck Fiala graduated from West Point in 1978 and has served in numerous staff and command positions here in the United States and abroad. Beginning as combat engineer platoon leader with the 194th Armored Brigade in Fort Knox, KY he quickly rose through the ranks. Among other assignments he commanded C Company, 11th Engineer Battalion at Fort Belvoir; served as Executive Officer in U.S. Army Headquarters Europe in Heidelberg, Germany; and worked in the Pentagon for the Office of the Chief of Staff and the Deputy Chief of Staff. During the course of his career, Chuck earned a master's degree in civil engineering from Purdue University and was also awarded a master's degree in National Security and Strategic Studies from the National War College.

I came to know COL Fiala 3 years ago when he was first selected as Commander and District Engineer of the Baltimore District, U.S. Army Corps of

Engineers, and have had the privilege of working closely with him on a number of water resource, environmental restoration, and military construction initiatives in Maryland and the mid-Atlantic region. Chuck has continued the tradition of outstanding leadership that has been the hallmark of the Baltimore District. Under his leadership, numerous military construction and civil works projects were initiated or completed including the Baltimore Harbor Anchorages Project, the straightening of the Tolchester Channel "S" Turn, the improvements to the Brewerton Channel and the construction of military housing at Fort Meade, to name only a few. Similarly, he directed and oversaw several critical environmental restoration projects including the cleanup of Fort Detrick's chemical and biological waste landfill, the restoration of the north end of Assateague Island National Seashore, the Chesapeake Bay oyster recovery effort, and 10 habitat restoration sites in the Anacostia River.

During his 25-year career in the Army, COL Fiala repeatedly demonstrated exceptional abilities and dedication that have earned him recognition and acclaim by his peers. He has been the recipient of many awards and decorations including the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation medal, and the Parachute Badge. His work ethic and principles of responsibility, reliability, and dedication will continue to serve as a standard for others who follow him as District Engineer.

It is my firm conviction that public service is one of the most honorable callings, one that demands the very best, most dedicated efforts of those who have the opportunity to serve their fellow citizens and country. Throughout his career Chuck Fiala has exemplified a steadfast commitment to meeting this demand.

I want to extend my personal congratulations and thanks for his hard work and dedication and wish him and his family the best of luck in the future.●

MONT VERNON CELEBRATES 227TH BIRTHDAY

● Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I rise today in honor of Mont Vernon, NH. This year, while the United States observed the 227th anniversary of our independence, the citizens of Mont Vernon have been planning the celebration of the town's 200th birthday. It is therefore timely and appropriate that we recognize this quintessential American community.

From its first settlement in the early 1700s through today, Mont Vernon has represented all that is great about the United States. Although it may not share the industrial or commercial legacy of its sister cities of Nashua or Manchester, the town's impact on our country has been just as vital. This im-

pact is best symbolized by the sacrifices the residents here have made in times of conflict. Fifty men from what was to become Mont Vernon served in the War of Independence; five of them lost their lives. During the Civil War, 35 men enlisted in the Union Army and, tragically, seven of them died. The whole community demonstrated their support for these soldiers and for the cause for which they were fighting by voting at a special town meeting to provide wages and outfits for those men who volunteered to serve.

The town's dedication to protecting the ideals of this country was also clear during both World War I and World War II. In the First World War, nine residents fought in that conflict. In the Second World War, twenty-three of them served including Mildred Coggin, Eleanor Carlton and Mary Holt Smith. These three women were nurses whose care of injured soldiers was critical to the war effort.

Of course, Mont Vernon continues to stand for those qualities which make New Hampshire such a special place to live: a dedication to public service and the spirit of volunteerism. The town's representatives to the New Hampshire General Court, Timothy Allen, Pam Coughlin and Margaret Hallyburton, are continuing in the path of the town's first elected official to that body, Major William Bradford. The members of the current Board of Selectmen, Mike Fimbel, John Koch and Peter Savage are honorably serving in the tradition the first Board of Selectmen, whose members included John Carlton, Joseph Langdell and Jacob Kendall, set in 1804.

So, on this the 200th anniversary of Mont Vernon, we salute its citizens and honor their accomplishments, their love of country and their overwhelming spirit of independence.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

S. 1490. A bill to eliminate the Federal quota and price support programs for tobacco, to provide assistance to quota holders, tobacco producers, and tobacco-dependent communities, and for other purposes.

S. 1504. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide protections and countermeasures against chemical, radiological,